



Course name:	Social Institutions in Appalachia
Department, course #, level:	Soc 422, undergraduate
Semester(s) and year(s) taught (without significant variation):	Fall 1998
Institution:	Union College
Instructor(s):	Deborah Thompson (606) 546-1324

APPALACHIAN SEMESTER

Soc 422, Fall 1998

Social Institutions in Appalachia

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This course is taken concurrent with HIS 475, SOC 349 and 487, therefore the course content, objectives, and activities are part of a complex, extremely interrelated fifteen (15) hour block of study.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Bruce Ergood & Bruce Kuhre, Ed., Appalachia: Social Context Past and Present (Third Edition). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall-Hunt Publishing Company, 1991 (also used for SOC 349).

Robert Higgs, Ambrose Manning, and Jim Wayne Miller, Appalachia Inside Out (2 volumes). Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1995.

James Still, River of Earth. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1978 (c James Still, 1940).

Selected articles and other readings will be placed on reserve in the Weeks Library or will be distributed in class.

OBJECTIVES:

?To trace the history and analyze the development of the major social institutions in Appalachia, such as the family, religion, education, politics, and the economy. Through course readings, lectures, class discussion, field trips, films, and student papers, the following topics will be addressed: the distinct cultural characteristics of the Appalachian Region; how the social stratification of Appalachia affects social, political, and economic life; and how other areas of America and the world may share in the issues, problems, and possibilities faced by Appalachia.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Attendance:** As in all other courses in the Appalachian Semester, attendance and participation in all scheduled events and activities is crucial.
2. **Idea book:** A notebook with daily entries is to be kept up to date by each student and will be periodically reviewed by the instructor. This will contain short writing assignments done in class, as well as records of cultural observations, reflections about readings, and other musings and explorations of ideas. It is not a diary of the day-to-day details of living. The notebook should include brief notations concerning the context in which observations were made, specific notations concerning field trip activities, critical comments and analysis of readings, and thoughts and feelings evoked by these observations and experiences. Your feelings will probably be both positive and negative, and both should be recorded. Please feel free to draw, write poetry, or use the best format for you. The content of the journal will not affect the grade, as long as it falls within the subject matter described here, and there will be many directed writings as well as free-writing assignments. The journals will be treated in a confidential manner, but keep in mind that they will be read. Because journal-writing varies among different people, the number and length of entries will be somewhat flexible, but a good rule of thumb is to write one entry per day of class. (Note that this does not mean you must write each day of class - if there are five class sessions per week, you could write three during the week and two on the weekend if you prefer.)
3. **Cultural study project:** The purpose of this assignment is to allow you to study some aspect of the culture here. There are several choices as to how to go about this. You could work individually, in a small group, or the whole group could work on one project. In any case, this project must include some original research on your part, and at least one interview which serves as data or background for your study. Examples would be an ethnography (a study of a particular group of people, to be able to understand the emic, or insider's views); a community study; or a particular question you would like to answer, such as why there is a high school dropout rate here in Knox County. Each student should choose a community institution, agency, or social group to become involved in and to provide a focus for the study. The choices of groups could be anything from a school, church, or volunteer fire department to a musical group, bingo crowd, hunting group, or regulars at a restaurant. Students should choose an organization or institution that is not connected with the college and that interests them sufficiently to spend enough regular contact hours to make your participant observations and get to know the participants themselves. Again, more detailed guidelines will be provided.
4. **Craft Project:** In lieu of the integrative paper in this class, a hands-on art or craft project may be completed to demonstrate proficiency and interest in an aspect of Appalachian traditional culture. This may be learning to play a musical instrument, learning to clog, completing a quilt square, weaving project, whittling, basketry, etc. and should be cleared through the instructor. The project will be due the final day of class, Tuesday, December 8 and will be shared with the class through demonstration or presentation.
5. **Values Paper:** Early in the semester, students will write a 2-4 page paper describing your values, stemming from class discussion, informal writing, and readings.

GRADING:

Class Attendance & Participation	25%
Field Observation & Reflection Notebook?(Idea Book)	30%
Cultural Study Project	25%
Craft project	10%
Values Reaction Paper	<u>10%</u>
	100%

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